

We claim:

1           1.       A method of routing work items in a multi-channel communication  
2 queuing system, the method comprising:  
3           forming a list of routes, wherein each route includes information related to the  
4           type of communication media available along the route for handling  
5           one or more of the work items.

1           2.       The method of claim 1, wherein each route further includes  
2 information indicating whether the route is active.

1           3.       The method of claim 1, wherein each route further includes  
2 information related to the priority of the route.

1           4.       The method of claim 1, wherein each route further includes  
2 information related to whether work items can be handled real-time.

1           5.       The method of claim 1, wherein each route further includes  
2 information related to the service level for work items handled on the route.

1           6.       The method of claim 1, wherein each route further includes  
2 information related to the number of work items that can be assigned to the route.

1           7.       The method of claim 1, further comprising entering one or more  
2 properties for the route.

1           8.       The method of claim 7, further comprising combining two or more of  
2 the properties of the route using a boolean operator.

1           9.       The method of claim 7, further comprising substituting a value for a  
2 variable in one or more of the properties.

1           10.      The method of claim 1, further comprising entering one or more  
2 escalation rules for the route.

1 11. The method of claim 10, further comprising combining two or more of  
2 the escalation rules using a boolean operator.

1 12. The method of claim 10, further comprising substituting a value for a  
2 variable in one or more of the escalation rules.

1 13. A computer readable storage media comprising:  
2 computer instructions to implement the method of claim 1.

1 14. A signal in a carrier medium comprising:  
2 computer instructions to implement the method of claim 1.

1 15. ✓ An apparatus for routing work items in a multi-channel communication  
2 queuing system, the apparatus comprising:  
3 means for forming a list of routes, wherein each route includes information  
4 related to the type of communication media available along the route  
5 for handling one or more of the work items.

1 16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein each route further includes one or  
2 more of the following types of information: whether the route is active; the priority of  
3 the route; whether work items can be handled real-time; the service level for work  
4 items handled on the route; and the number of work items that can be assigned to the  
5 route.

1 17. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising means for entering one  
2 or more properties for the route.

1 18. The apparatus of claim 17, further comprising means for combining  
2 two or more of the properties of the route using a boolean operator.

1 19. The apparatus of claim 17, further comprising means for substituting a  
2 value for a variable in one or more of the properties.

1           20.     The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising means for entering one  
2     or more escalation rules for the route.

1           21.     The apparatus of claim 20, further comprising means for combining  
2     two or more of the escalation rules using a boolean operator.

1           22.     The apparatus of claim 20, further comprising means for substituting a  
2     value for a variable in one or more of the escalation rules.

1           23.     A database structure for a multi-channel communication queuing  
2     system, comprising:  
3                 a list of routes, wherein the list of routes includes information related to one or  
4                 more properties for the route.

1           24.     The database structure of claim 23, further comprising one or more  
2     escalation rules for one or more of the routes.

1           25.     The database structure of claim 23, further comprising information  
2     related to the type of communication media available along the route for handling one  
3     or more of the work items.

1           26.     The database structure of claim 23, further comprising one or more of  
2     the following types of information: whether the route is active; the priority of the  
3     route; whether work items can be handled real-time; the service level for work items  
4     handled on the route; and the number of work items that can be assigned to the route.

1           27.     A system for routing work items to agents, wherein the work items can  
2     be of one of two or more different communication media types from two or more  
3     different communication channels, comprising:  
4                 a queuing engine including a list of routes, wherein the list of routes includes  
5                 information related to one or more properties for each route.

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- 2     determine the amount of time that a work item has been waiting to be assigned to an
- 3     agent, and to escalate the search for an agent to handle the work item based on the
- 4     escalation rules.

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